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### COMX 115S.50: Introduction to Interpersonal Communication

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**THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA  
MISSOULA COLLEGE  
DEPARTMENT OF APPLIED ARTS AND SCIENCES  
SPRING 2015, ONLINE COURSE SYLLABUS**

**COURSE NUMBER AND TITLE:** COMX 115S, Intro to Interpersonal Communication

**SEMESTER CREDITS:** 3

**PREREQUISITES:** None

**PROFESSOR:** Kimberly Reiser

**E-MAIL ADDRESS:** Kim.Reiser@umontana.edu

Please communicate with me via email. You are welcome to request a telephone call or Skype call via email or on my voice mail at 243-7839. If you do so, be sure to include your contact information as well as a variety of times that you are available. I will arrange a time with you that matches up with my schedule. If your questions or concerns pertain to Moodle, please call UMLine Tech Support at 243-4999.

**OFFICE LOCATION:** HB 02, or the fishbowl, on the East Missoula College Campus in the Health and Business Building

**OFFICE HOURS:** Wednesday 1-2, Tuesday 1-2, or by appointment

**COURSE RATIONALE**

Beebe, Beebe and Redmond (2014) write that “communication is at the core of our existence.... Most people spend between 80 and 90 percent of their waking hours communicating with others” (p.2). Beebe et al. explain that “it is through these interactions with others that we develop interpersonal relationships” (p.2). Our communication encounters create our identities. In addition, communication defines our relationships with friends, family, loved ones, and colleagues. Therefore, our understanding of interpersonal communication and the role we play in it will not only contribute to our sense of well-being and success in personal relationships, but to our success in work relationships as well. Furthermore, Beebe et al. (2014) write that communication affects the quality of our physical and emotional health. In fact, supervisors recognize the importance of considering the communication skills of prospective employees. In a 2013 *Job Outlook* report, the National Association of Colleges and Employers lists the ability to communicate with people in and outside the organization as the top skill an employer considers when hiring an employee. Second on their list is the ability to work well in a team structure. Interpersonal Communication is particularly useful as a foundational general education course as it helps students develop a skill that promotes success in a number of occupational fields.

**COURSE PURPOSE**

The purpose of this course is for students to become aware of their present communication styles and decide what is effective and what can be improved in order to build healthier relationships on an interpersonal level. Students will learn skills to help them manage conflict both in personal relationships and professional relationships. Communication will be viewed from both a verbal and nonverbal perspective. Communicating more clearly and listening more effectively will be addressed as well as the following topics: creating identities through communication, communication and

emotion, interpersonal conflict management, creating healthy communication climates, gender communication, and cultural diversity and communication.

### **STUDENT PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES:**

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Recognize communication patterns from family of origin.
2. Understand relational meaning of what we say both verbally and nonverbally, and the effect this has on relationships personally, professionally and in an educational capacity.
3. Practice skills in listening reflectively, attentively, and more empathetically.
4. Recognize passive, aggressive, passive-aggressive and assertive behaviors and learn how to deal more effectively with them through conflict management skills.
5. Understand how the quality of communication directly affects the quality of relationships and ultimately the quality of life.
6. Identify practical skills geared towards improving communication in the workplace, in personal relationships, and in the family.
7. Understand the role emotions play in communication.

### **GRADING:**

Online Essay Exams (3) – 35% of grade

Interpersonal Relationship Paper – 20% of grade

Journal Entries – 25% of grade

Substantive Discussions (4) – 20% of grade

GRADING SCALE: 100-90 (A), 89-80 (B), 79-70 (C), 69-60 (D), 59 and Below (F)

### **ASSIGNMENT AND TEST MAKEUP POLICY:**

No assignment or test make-ups will be allowed. Please plan ahead. All of the due dates for readings, assignments, and tests are listed in the course calendar. In addition, the week before assignments or tests are due, reminders will be posted in a weekly announcement. It is your responsibility to keep track of the course calendar and check announcements regularly.

If you encounter “technical difficulties” with a test, please notify me by email or phone the day of the test. I will verify the status of this issue in Moodle. It is important we reschedule the test within 48 hours of the test date.

## **DISABILITIES AND SPECIFIC LEARNING NEEDS:**

Please inform me as soon as possible if you have any disabilities or circumstances that may require special consideration. It is your responsibility to inform me, at the onset of this course, of any disability and the ways that you and the DSS have determined are necessary to accommodate your needs. I am happy to work with you in order to achieve your goals for this course. I will expect to receive a letter from DSS documenting your requested accommodations.

## **ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT:**

All students must practice academic honesty. Cheating and/or plagiarism will not be tolerated. Specifically, you are not allowed to give or receive assistance on assignments or tests. All your work must be completed independently, unless it is group assigned. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or disciplinary sanction by the University. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at <http://www.umn.edu/SA/VP/SA/index.cfm/page/1321>.

## **REQUIRED TEXTS:**

Wood, J. T. (2013). Interpersonal communication: Everyday encounters (7th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing.

\*This print text can be purchased at the Missoula College bookstore. However, it can also be purchased as a print, rental, or electronic textbook through our publisher at <http://www.cengagebrain.com/micro/1-1T7RE8P>.

## **COURSE OUTLINE:**

The following readings, tests, and assignments are due on the day they are listed.

\*When there are discussion forums, the deadline for posting initial responses to questions will be by Tuesday at midnight of that week. Replies must be posted by Sunday of that same week. On weeks when tests or assignments are due, they will be turned in on Monday.

### **January**

26 Introductions  
Be sure to respond to the discussion.

### **February**

2 Chapter 1

9 Chapter 2

Graded Discussion Forum #1 (As will be the case every time a discussion forum is posted, initial responses must be posted by Tuesday (midnight) of this week; the discussion will end Sunday at midnight.)

17 Chapter 3 (My announcement will be posted on Tuesday of this week since Monday the 16<sup>th</sup> is a holiday.)  
**Journal Entries 1 & 2 Due**

23 **Test 1 (Ch 1-3)**

### **March**

2 Chapter 4  
Graded Discussion Forum #2

9 Chapter 5

16 Gender Article  
Graded Discussion Forum #3

23 Chapter 6  
**Journal Entries 3 and 4 Due**

30 **SPRING BREAK**

### **April**

6 **Test 2 (Ch 4-6)**  
START RELATIONSHIP PAPERS IF YOU HAVEN'T ALREADY

13 Chapter 7  
Graded Discussion Forum #4

20 Chapter 8

27 **Relationship Papers Due**  
Chapter 9

### **May**

4 **Test 3 (Ch 7-9)**

11 Final Reflections